

Serial No. 09/596,244**PATENT****IBM Docket No. RAL919980012US1****REMARKS**

Claims 1-7 are in this application.

This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed February 12, 2004.

Claims 4-6 stand allowed, subject to objections set forth in 1 and 2 (page 2) Office Action mailed February 12, 2004.

Claims 2-3 are objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claim but would be allowed if written in independent form including limitation of base claim.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kloth (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,649).

Regarding claims 4-6, they are amended to remove the objections. As a consequence they are now in condition for allowance and will not be discussed further in this document.

Claim 2 is rewritten in independent form. As a consequence, claims 2 and 3 are now in condition for allowance. Claims 2 and 3 will not be discussed further in this document.

The rejection of claim 1 will now be addressed.

Claim 1 sets forth a method to automatically generate a table of network subnets using acts set forth in the claim.

U.S. Patent 6,208,649 B1 (Kloth) describes VLAN mapping technique in which a derived VLAN is based upon contents of a protocol field mapped to a 2-bit code

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concatenated to an index to form a mapping address which is used to access a RAM from which the derived VLAN is read. (Col. 12, lines 24-40).

In an alternate embodiment the derived VLAN uses subnet values (col. 11, lines 30-44). The Examiner seems to argue VLAN mapping in Kloth is like automatically generating subnet configurations as set forth in applicants' claim 1. To support the rejection the Examiner compares elements of claim 1 with the reference and seems to conclude the reference teaches the claimed invention of claim 1.

In response applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner and argue the Examiner erred in the comparison and erroneously concluded claim 1 obvious in view of the reference. For example, the Examiner states that the element of applicants' claim 1, to wit, "establishing and maintaining in memory a table of IP subnets each of which includes . . ." may be found at col. 3, lines 33-39 of the reference (see Office Action page 3, lines 5-8).

Page 3, lines 33-39 of Kloth describes Figure 3 which is the format of an IP address. Applicants contend the format of Figure 3 described at page 3, lines 33-39 Kloth is different from the subnet format set forth in claim 1. The Examiner has not given any reason why the format in the reference would suggest or render obvious the one set forth in claim 1. Applicants contend an artisan viewing the teachings, including page 3, lines 33-39 of Kloth would not establish or generate the subnet of claim 1 because Kloth teachings relate to VLAN mapping whereas claim 1 relates to establishing a table of subnets. These, applicants contend, are different inventions and the teaching in one does not render the other obvious.

Furthermore the Examiner states that the last element of claim 1 (i.e. lines 13-17) is suggested by teachings at col. 13, lines 16-24. See page 3, lines 13-17, Office Action.

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Applicants contend the teachings in Kloth, including col. 13, lines 16-24, relate to obtaining a derived VLAN and its use. This applicants contend is not in any way related to claim 1. The Examiner has not given any reason why the teachings in Kloth including col. 13, lines 16-24 render claim 1 obvious. As a consequence applicants contend the Examiner fails to provide a prima facie case of obviousness. Therefore, claim 1 and dependent claim 7 are patentable over the art of record.

The newly added claim 7 is patentable over the art of record for reasons set forth above.

In summary applicants' argument traversing the rejection is two-fold, namely: the invention claimed in claim 1 is different from the invention disclosed in the reference and the Examiner fails to make out a prima facie case of obviousness.

It is believed this amendment answers all issued raised in the Office Action. Reconsideration is hereby requested and an early allowance of all the claims is solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,


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